CIA Reportedly Compiled 700 Pages On Questionable Agency Activities

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By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Central Intelligence Agency compiled some 700 pages of reports from its employees in response to a 1973 directive calling for the disclosure of any questionable activities, it was reported yesterday.

The responses on potentially improper or illegal undertaking were cited by Morton Halperin, a former member of the National Security Council staff and now affiliated with the Center for National Security Studies.

Halperin said at a news conference that he plans to press for the documents and a long list of other CIA records as part of a freedom-of-information project sponsored by the center for the American Civil Liberties Union.

He said the CIA's general counsel, John Warner, told him earlier this week of the 700 pages of notes and reports from employees as an illustration of how "burdensome" it would be for the CIA to produce all the requested information.

The CIA's legislative charter prohibits it from undertaking domestic law enforcement functions, but disclosures stemming from the Watergate scandal showed that the ban had not always been observed.

As a result, on May 9, 1973, then CIA Director James R. Schlesinger issued a 1½-page memorandum addressed to all employees ordering them to report to him on any activities "which might be construed to be outside the legislative charter of this agency."

Making public a copy of the memo, along with a subsequent regulation making it a standing CIA rule, Halperin said the two documents were the only ones the CIA has produced so far in response to a 44-point request he made last month for agency files and directives that might bear on domestic activities.

Halperin said, however, that CIA officials are still apparently willing to dicker over the other requests and discuss a possible timetable for rulings on the information sought.

Promising court suits to obtain records that might be denied, Halperin said the CIA has already refused to make public its lump-sum budget request for the coming 1976 fiscal year and its actual spending in fiscal 1974.

CIA Director William E. Colby has maintained that the Schlesinger inquiry resulted in a series of instructions in August, 1973, that will prevent any future missteps by the agency. A White House spokesman indicated earlier this week, however, that additional safeguards may be necessary.